



# Maid Maleen's True Love Triumph

In a kingdom long ago, lived a brave princess named Maid Maleen, who loved a prince from a distant land. But her father, the King, wished her to marry another. The prince and Maid Maleen, with hearts entwined, refused to part. Maid Maleen told her father, "I shall marry none but the one I truly love." Angered, the King had a tower built, so dark that no light could enter. He declared, "You shall stay here for seven years, Maid Maleen, and then we shall see if your will remains strong."

Maid Maleen and her loyal maid were locked away in the tower with enough food for seven years. The prince, heartbroken, would often wander near the tower, calling out for Maid Maleen, but his words never reached her. Inside the tower, the two friends waited in darkness, hoping for freedom.

As the years passed, their food dwindled, and Maid Maleen knew their time in the tower was ending. But no rescue came. In desperation, Maid Maleen decided, "We must escape ourselves!" With a bread-knife, they worked tirelessly, chipping away at the mortar until, after three days, a ray of light pierced their gloom. They managed to create an opening big enough to escape.

The world outside was unrecognizable. War had ravaged the land, leaving desolation in its wake. With heavy hearts, Maid Maleen and her maid wandered through destroyed villages, seeking a new beginning. They traveled far, facing hunger and rejection, until they reached a great city.

In this city, Maid Maleen discovered that her beloved prince was to be wed to another, a maiden as wicked as she was unattractive. With

nowhere else to turn, Maid Maleen and her maid found work in the royal kitchens.

On the wedding day, the ugly bride, ashamed of her appearance, forced Maid Maleen to take her place in the wedding procession. Dressed in the bride's finery, Maid Maleen's beauty shone. The prince, bewildered, noticed her resemblance to his lost love. Throughout the day, Maid Maleen dropped hints of her true identity, but fear and duty kept her silent.

That evening, the prince questioned the false bride, but she could not answer his queries about the day's events. In a panic, she ran to Maid Maleen for answers and repeated them to the prince. But when asked about a special token the prince had given to his true bride, the false one faltered.

The prince, suspecting the truth, sought out the woman who knew his heart. There, in the kitchens, he found Maid Maleen. Recognizing the token around her neck, he knew at once that she was his true bride. Maid Maleen shared her tale of love and endurance, and the prince declared, "You are my true bride, the one I have always loved."

The wicked imposter faced justice for her deceit, while Maid Maleen and her prince were united in a true and loving marriage. They ruled wisely and kindly, their love a beacon in the kingdom.

And so, the story of Maid Maleen's courage and faith in love was told for generations, inspiring all who heard it to believe in the power of true love and perseverance.